early years, his family life, his lonely years as a schoolboy, his university years of tumult in the period immediately before the Revolution, and his intense activity intellectually in Russia's cultural awakening in the first two decades of this century. His spiritual and intellectual travel from Kantianism, through Marxism, Nietzscheanism, German idealism, and arriving finally to Christianity (with the help of some mystics like Dostoevsky) is clearly traced. A rather typical incident from his life is given: as the morning sun came to scatter the night through which one of his frequent discussion groups had philosophized, and the various participants were beginning to leave, Berdyaev cried out: "But we can't leave yet; we haven't settled the problem of God."

Berdyaev's thought is so many-faceted and complicated that it is hard for one to find the central theme of his writings. Lowrie suggests that it should be sought in the philosopher's awareness of the reality of another world and of the illusory nature of the present world. But Berdyaev was full of paradoxes and his thinking hinged on a radical dialectic of time and eternity. He was, of course, a special kind of Christian and claimed the right of free quest for the truth. But still it is as a Christian thinker that Berdyaev must be evaluated and the present book, though it has not the final analysis of his main theses, does provide us with a clearer interpretation of his ideas than heretofor available.

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